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# ENTERTAINING

Let's face it, most of us don't *choose* to entertain. We do it because we feel obligated to return hospitality, promote camaraderie, support our spouses or do our share. There are a lot of events, styles, levels of formality and themes that we can use to help plan and execute social functions. The most important issue is comfort, both yours and your guests. You don't have to pull out all the stops every time you host company. You also don't have to prepare all the food yourself. With all the convenience foods available now, entertaining has never been easier. And whatever else you do, be sure to enjoy yourself. Your company will know if you are feeling overwhelmed, which makes them feel awkward. If you are relaxed, they will be too.

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## SETTING UP A BAR

Today most parties are the beer, wine and soda variety but if you do want to set up a bar here are some suggestions. You can't go wrong with the basics: Scotch, bourbon, gin, vodka, rum and tequila. Include traditional mixers and tonic, water and soda. Include, bottled water, sodas, and fruit drinks.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Plan to include wines, red (cooled), and white (chilled).</li><li>■ A bottle of wine will serve 5-6. The same size bottle of spirits will yield 17 drinks if you use a standard shot glass</li><li>■ ICE is crucial. Consider each guest will consume a quarter to a half pound of ice.</li><li>■ Buy, rent or borrow glasses. A standard 10-12 ounce size is acceptable.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ They needn't all match: an eclectic collection makes for good conversation. Plastic will work especially well for really large gatherings and outdoor activities.</li><li>■ Plan on one glass per hour per person, then add a few more so you don't run out!!!</li><li>■ To chill a bottle quickly, fill a container with ice and water so that the bottle is submerged, turn a couple of times and in ten minutes you will have a nicely chilled bottle.</li><li>■ Don't forget the designated drivers!!</li></ul> |
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## Dinner Parties

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Time: Usually at 7:00 PM.</li><li>■ Serve dinner within 45 minutes of arrival time (don't wait more than 15 minutes for a late guest).</li><li>■ Before eating, hostess should excuse herself and:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Light the candles</li><li>• Fill the water glasses</li><li>• Put the food on the table.</li></ul></li><li>■ The host should:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Take orders for wine, and fill the wine glasses at the table.</li><li>• Carve meat in advance if necessary (or as guests are called to dinner, start carving).</li></ul></li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Guests should take a portion of everything offered unless you are not allowed to eat that particular food.</li><li>■ No one should eat until everyone is served (unless requested by hostess to do so, as food will get cold). Hostess takes first bite, then others may all put food on a utensil.</li><li>■ Guests should stay about an hour after dinner is over before departing. (There are exceptions. Sometimes it's wise to gauge this yourself.)</li><li>■ Avoid lavish meals involving great expense, as your guests may be uncomfortable about reciprocating in a like manner.</li></ul> |
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## Formal Dinners

- Most elaborate.
- Check the layout of a formal place setting in an etiquette book ahead of time.
- Table should be set before guests arrive.
- For a large group, a seating chart designates dinner partners and tables.
- Place cards and/or menu cards add a nice touch.
- Male guest of honor is seated to the right of the hostess.
- Female guest of honor is seated to the right of the host.
- Once the guests have all been served, the hostess takes the first bite before the guests pick up their utensils.
- For flatware, select the outside piece (furthest from the rim of the plate) first.
- Smoking is only permitted if ashtrays are provided.
- Once the meal is finished, the table is cleared of all but clean utensils and drinks before dessert is served.
- Dessert may also be served either at the table or on a coffee table, along with coffee and/or liqueurs.
- Food should be served from the left (as should plates) and cleared on the right side of each guest.

## Potluck

- Fun and easy.
- Hostess may plan the meal and provide beverages and utensils.
- All guests bring a favorite food to share.
- There are three main potluck priorities:
- Dishes that compliment each other
- Food that can travel
- Recipes that require little, if any, last minute work.
- For a small group of close friends or neighbors:
- The host chooses the entrée and each guest selects a course to compliment it.
- The participants all get together and decide what they want to prepare.
- The host plans the entire menu and gives each guest a recipe.
- For a large group of co-workers, friends or neighbors:
- Make a guest list and assign each person a category of food to bring.
- You can use a sign-up sheet.
- As people RSVP tell them what is needed and have them volunteer.

Potluck Rule: Whoever makes the dish needs to bring everything needed to serve it — garnishes, platters, serving utensil and so on. Mark your platters on the bottom so that they can be returned easily.

ADD YOUR  
**IDEAS**  
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HERE

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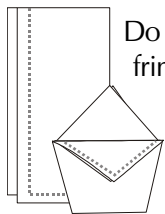
# ENTERTAINING TIPS

- Ask for RSVP's ("Regrets Only" don't have much success).
- The average turnout at a social function is  $\frac{2}{3}$  of those invited.
- Use your fireplace.
- Make tablecloths out of fabric or sheets.
- Tell your guests what to wear.
- Ask your guests if they have any dietary restrictions in advance.
- Fruit, candles, branches and flowers all make nice centerpieces.
- Don't serve food requiring a knife at a buffet.
- Guests at a potluck should bring a finished dish in its serving dish, (not a travel container) with the necessary utensils.
- Set the tone of your party with appropriate music.
- Tiki torches and luminaries add a festive touch.
- Great desserts make lasting impressions.
- Front Door: polished brass, post party theme, host and hostess be at the door.
- Always have something on hand to offer surprise guests.
- Look for an unexpected or unusual location for a party. Sometimes the location is the cause of the party.
- Look for reasons to entertain. Don't wait until you have to.
- Discover your own comfort level and entertain there.
- Plan in advance, prepare in advance.
- Don't appear overworked or exhausted when your company arrives.
- Introduce your guests. Give enough information to get the conversation started.
- Don't let a guest be embarrassed.
- Don't overdo the decorations.
- Details have impact. Present something in a new way. Don't top the salad with store bought croutons. Instead, make your own (cut them into shapes with cookie cutters), and serve them separately in a bowl.
- Watch magazines for new table decorations. Look for a more inexpensive way to achieve the same effect.
- Centerpieces should not be higher than 13".
- For a large formal dinner, decide in advance who sits where, and with whom. Look for common interests.
- Use your piano. Invite someone who will play for you.
- Get a price list for your local rental stores, particularly for party items.
- Don't let your children perform.
- Do have your children make a brief appearance to be introduced to your guests. It's good practice for them.
- If you are serving alcohol, monitor the intake.
- Remove clutter.
- Place fresh linen hand towels in the guest bathroom. Add flowers. Provide fresh soap and an extra roll of paper.
- Use your washing machine as the cooler. Let the ice melt overnight, and set it on the spin cycle the next morning.
- Order dyed bread from the grocery store. Pink for baby girls, green for St. Patrick's Day, etc.
- Carve out a large pumpkin for a punch bowl. Attach a plastic bag to the top with toothpicks, and add the punch. A little dry ice adds a festive touch.
- For a simmering potpourri, boil cinnamon sticks, cloves and orange rind.
- Ceramic rings for your light bulbs retain scented oils longer than metal ones.
- Guests who are allowed to assist you often feel more comfortable.
- When in doubt, do the kindest thing possible.
- If you are complemented, simply respond with a simple, "Thank you!" Excuses and explanations are NOT necessary.
- Salads store well in a Ziploc bag that has a folded paper towel on the bottom. To serve, remove the paper towel, add dressing, shake and pour into the serving bowl.
- To speed cleaning tarnished silver, line a 9"x13" pan (or a sink) with aluminum foil. Put the silver pieces in and sprinkle with  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup baking soda and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup salt. Pour boiling water into the pan, making sure all pieces are covered. Let sit for a few minutes. Drain, wash and dry.
- To clean oven racks, roll a 2-ply garbage bag down to the base. Insert oven racks, and spray with Oven Cleaner, rolling bag up as you spray higher. Close the bag tightly, and set outside overnight. Use caution in touching the racks the next morning, they may be hot. Hose them off.

# DECORATING IDEAS

## Napkins

Use one flat sheet to make a dozen 20" x 20" napkins. Use kerchiefs, hand towels, scarves, fringed squares of fabric.



Do not crease napkins, use natural folds. Cocktail napkins — 5" fringed squares/5"x 10" for dessert away from table.

Napkins can be in wineglass, on the plate, to left of the plate or in the center of the mat or place setting. For formal occasions, it is folded and put on the service plate.

## Escort Cards

Escort cards are helpful in mixing your guests. The man's name goes on the outside and the lady he will take in to the buffet table is on the inside. These cards can be in puzzle pieces so guests need to go find their partner with the correct piece.

## Menu Cards

Can use one for each person, a card for 2-4 people, one at the start of the buffet table, etc.

Can use in a small picture frame (inexpensive plastic... 2-part frame — name on one side & menu on other).

## Place Cards

Print or hand write place cards. Can use nicknames, riddles, Christmas ornament that indicates a particular person, etc.

## Flowers

- Cut stems on the diagonal under water, and immediately place in lukewarm water.
- Remove all foliage below the waterline.
- To extend life, recut stems and place in a fresh mixture of  $\frac{1}{2}$  water and  $\frac{1}{2}$  non-diet citrus soft drink.
- To stop mold, add  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. chlorine bleach per quart of liquid.



## Candles

Don't use scented candles — some people are allergic. Put in freezer several hours before using to avoid dripping.

Not used at brunches, coffees, and luncheons.

Used at teas with drapes closed and evening functions.

Don't always use just 2 candles. Try massed groupings; put greens around them (ivy, pine, etc.).

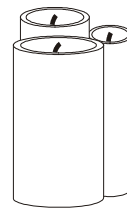
Use glass candlesticks of different sizes and shapes together — 2 tall, 2 flat, 1 flat, round.

Try groupings of votive candles.

Top of wick should be burned in advance.

To burn slower, place in freezer for several hours.

Be seasonal — use apples, squash, etc. to hold your candles.



## Teacart

Teacarts are very useful for entertaining — traveling bar, cleaning cart, side table for coffee and dessert, etc.

## Party Mixers

Escort cards — Name tags on back of guest & they have to go ask questions of others to discover who they are. Could also find the lady/gentleman who would match them as their dinner partner. Place card on the table has name inside of lady that each gentleman will sit for dessert (when time to move, ask gentleman to look inside their card, take their wineglass & napkin with them).

## Inexpensive Festive Touches

- Tie long thin breadsticks with ribbon.
- Use lacquered chopsticks for Asian foods.
- Use linen dish towels for napkins.
- Vary your china patterns with each course.
- Make place cards with funny sayings.
- Have each guest bring a homemade dessert. This saves time and is fun.
- Send your guests home with a small party favor: wrapped cookies, candies, spiced nuts.
- Serve hors d'oeuvres and drinks in the kitchen.
- Hand out aprons and let your guests help prepare the meal.
- Make an edible centerpiece. Draw a number at the end of the evening to see who gets to take it home.
- Serve finger bowls with lemon slices.
- Steam little white washcloths in your vegetable steamer (rolled up), and pass them around after the meal.
- Create a coffee bar: hot coffee with individual bowls of shaved chocolate, whipped cream, Kahlua, cinnamon sticks, sugar cubes, brown sugar and some liqueurs.
- Make two dramatically different desserts and serve them alternately to guests. This encourages sharing and conversation.

## Party Supplies to Collect

- Anything silver (if you're willing to clean it)
- Chafing dishes
- Decorative candles & candle holders
- Crock pots (large and small)
- Punch bowl, ladle and cups
- Extra salad and dessert forks
- Extra teaspoons and iced teaspoons
- Pitchers
- Cocktail and dinner napkins (cloth)
- Tablecloths & place mats (cloth)
- Attractive trivets for hot foods
- Plastic sand buckets for summer parties
- Plain or painted clay pots
- A blow up kiddie pool for beverages
- Red, white and blue items
- Fabrics to scrunch on table-tops
- Ribbon for table runners and decoration
- Lemons & limes in a vase
- Mirrored tiles for centerpieces
- Hat boxes
- Small framed pictures
- Birdhouses
- Fish netting
- Votive candles, clustered in different shaped glasses
- Serving utensils
- Seasonal items
- Warming trays
- Vases
- Glasses
- Carafes
- Serving bowls
- Chargers
- Bamboo trays
- Cheese knives
- Wooden plates
- Quilts for tablecloths
- Thermos
- Baskets
- Ice buckets
- Assorted platters
- Pinecones
- Metal washtubs
- Garden tools
- Artificial flowers, vines, garlands or fruit
- Seashells and sand right on the table
- A variety of nuts, spray painted
- Large bowls of M & Ms

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# PLANNING THE PARTY

## 2-4 Weeks in Advance

- \_\_\_ Choose time and place
- \_\_\_ Send invitations
- \_\_\_ Hire professionals you will use
- \_\_\_ Plan menu and theme, if any
- \_\_\_ Buy nonperishables and bar supplies
- \_\_\_ Prepare foods that can be frozen
- \_\_\_ Polish silver
- \_\_\_ Make shopping and "To Do" lists
- \_\_\_ Order bread or rolls (if needed)
- \_\_\_ Order beer kegs (if needed)

## 3-5 Days in Advance

- \_\_\_ Clean dishes, glasses, baskets — whatever you will need
- \_\_\_ Assemble music
- \_\_\_ Iron linens and put them out
- \_\_\_ Clean thoroughly
- \_\_\_ Decorate if needed
- \_\_\_ Run any remaining errands
- \_\_\_ Pick up borrowed items
- \_\_\_ Wash and iron all clothes needed for party

## 2 Days Ahead

- \_\_\_ Set up tables completely
- \_\_\_ Get out dishes needed
- \_\_\_ Label what platters and utensils are for what dish
- \_\_\_ Prepare salad greens, dressings, clean vegetables — whatever can be done in advance
- \_\_\_ Clean and cut up any garnishes

## Day Before

- \_\_\_ Confirm all professional service arrival times
- \_\_\_ Pick up cake, flowers and prepared items
- \_\_\_ Thaw frozen items
- \_\_\_ Pick up rental items
- \_\_\_ Prepare refrigerator foods
- \_\_\_ Thoroughly clean guest areas and bathroom
- \_\_\_ Make dessert, if needed
- \_\_\_ Make a final schedule with cooking time, temperatures, anything you can think of
- \_\_\_ Set up bar area

## The Big Day

- \_\_\_ Arrange flowers
- \_\_\_ Place cold foods on platters and garnish
- \_\_\_ Pick up ice, kegs, bread, etc.
- \_\_\_ Relax and enjoy yourself!

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# TABLE SETTING IDEAS

## Afternoon Coffee

Place china coffeepot on a silver tray, along with creamer, sugar (consider using sugar cubes instead of the ground sugar), two cups, saucers and teaspoons. Put a few fresh flower heads around the tray.

## Dinner for 6

Set table formally. Poof some tulle (net) fabric in the center, and sprinkle confetti on top. Place flower arrangement over tulle. Bridal illusion (used for veils) works well also. Add crystal candlesticks with candles matching the fabric, and fold napkins and place a flower in the napkin pocket.

## Football Game

Cover coffee table with football tablecloth. (Use green felt or Astroturf, and either glue white felt strips for the yard lines, or use adhesive tape.) Use ceramic serving pieces that have a football motif for food. Beer mugs with school logos and themed paper napkins finish the setting.

## Indoor Picnic

Set a picnic basket, plastic dishes, glasses, flatware on the countertop. Add a bottle of wine and a corkscrew. Eat on a light blanket on the floor, with a portable radio providing the music.

## Elegant Tea

Crisp white tablecloth, tea items, vase with flowers, two tier serving plate with scones, cookies, dainty finger sandwiches, etc. Add china dessert plates, cups and saucers for two, and finish with silver flatware. Provide a ladies fan at each place.

## Romantic Nightcap

Place a TV tray in the master bedroom. Cover with a square table topper. Place a brandy decanter, 2 sniffers and some chocolate mints in a silver dish on the tray.

Put burning candles around the room.

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# CENTERPIECES

- Buy several matching votive candles and place them in a variety of clear glasses. Tie a bow onto each stem.
- A plain pineapple (the symbol for hospitality) is pretty unadorned, but lovely sprayed gold or silver and surrounded by greenery. They can be sprayed several days ahead, but will start to weep after 5 or 6 days.
- Fill a crystal bowl with water and float lemon slices with yellow and white daisies. Or add floating candles instead.
- Float flower heads in a bowl.
- Select 3-5 long stemmed flowers. Place them in a 6" deep container with oasis. Add greenery and tie a ribbon halfway up the stems.
- Use a collection as a centerpiece. Pieces of blue and white china, arranged at different heights over empty boxes covered with draped fabric can be a unique addition to your table. Or decorative bottles, each with one flower in it, scattered between a mixture of candlesticks.
- Clear glass vases filled with pale roses (pale peach or light pink), chiffon bow and some babies breath make an elegant combination.
- For an Italian dinner, use empty Chianti bottles for your candle-holders. Using a loaf of unsliced bread, hollow out part of the center, and place some flowers in the hole.
- Lay the bread on it's side, or cut off the other end and stand it upright. Use large dry noodles, such as manicotti, for napkin rings.
- A mixture of bread, rolls, breadsticks, placed either in a basket lined with a fabric napkin can make an attractive, casual centerpiece.
- Wrap empty boxes with gift wrap suited to your theme, and place platters on top of the boxes. Or drape unwrapped boxes with fabric. Vary the height and size of the boxes. Make a flower and greenery wreath with florists wire, and place around a pillar candle. Use an obi as a table runner. With a wide ribbon, make a large bow. Wire to 1 or 2 lengths of the same ribbon.

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# RECIPES FOR A SUCCESSFUL PARTY

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## Salmon with Herb and Cream Sauce

*Makes 4 servings*

½ cup dry white wine

1 cup whipping cream

4 tablespoons (½ stick) unsalted butter, room temperature

4, 6 ounce skinless salmon filets

½ cup dry vermouth

1 large shallot, minced

2 tablespoons minced assorted fresh herbs (such as tarragon, basil, dill and chives)

fresh lemon juice

Preheat oven to 400F. Boil wine in heavy small saucepan until reduced to 1 tablespoon, about 5 minutes. Add cream and boil until reduced to ½ cup, about 10 minutes. Set sauce aside.

Use ½ tablespoon butter to grease heavy large ovenproof skillet. Arrange salmon in single layer in skillet. Pour vermouth over. Top with shallot. Bring to simmer. Cover skillet with foil and place in oven. Bake salmon until just cooked through, about 10 minutes.

Transfer salmon to platter. Tent with foil. Mix liquid in skillet into sauce. Cook over medium heat until reduced to sauce consistency, stirring occasionally, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat. Whisk in remaining 3 ½ tablespoons butter, then minced herbs. Season sauce with lemon juice, salt and pepper. Spoon over salmon.

## Spinach Quesadillas

*Makes 20 quarters*

Spinach mixture:

½ tablespoon butter

10 ounces frozen chopped spinach, thawed and drained

¼ pound fresh mushrooms, sliced

pinch nutmeg

pinch cayenne pepper

Quesadillas:

10 large flour tortillas

8 ounces cream cheese, softened

10 ounces Monterey Jack cheese, shredded

sour cream

### Grilled Sweet Potato and Four-Pepper Salsa

For spinach mixture, melt butter in large skillet and lightly saute spinach and mushrooms. Stir in spices. Set aside. Drain if necessary.

For quesadillas, preheat oven to 375 F. Place 5 tortillas on cookie sheet. Top with cream cheese, spinach mixture, and jack cheese. Place tortilla on top. Bake 7 minutes. (Tortillas should be crispy around edges with cheese melted.) Cut into quarters. Serve hot with sour cream and Grilled Sweet Potato and Four-Pepper Salsa.



## Grilled Sweet Potato and Four-Pepper Salsa

*Makes 2 cups*

- 2 large sweet potatoes, peeled and sliced ¼ inch thick
- 1 large green bell pepper, sliced into ½ inch strips
- 1 large yellow bell pepper, sliced into ½ inch strips
- 1 large red bell pepper, sliced into ½ inch strips
- 1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and halved (wear gloves)
- 1 medium red onion, diced
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- ¼ cup fresh cilantro, chopped
- ⅓ cup balsamic vinegar
- 2 teaspoons red wine vinegar
- ½ cup extra virgin olive oil
- salt and pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 375 F. Bake sweet potatoes until medium soft, approximately 40 minutes to an hour. Let cool, peel and slice. On a grill or grill top stove, grill sweet potato slices and all peppers on both sides until lightly charred. Remove. Dice (or chop) sweet potato slices and pepper slices into small pieces.

Combine potato slices and peppers with onion, garlic and cilantro in medium bowl. Toss with vinegars and oil. Add salt and pepper to taste. (Cover and refrigerate several hours or overnight.) Stir before serving.

## Chicken Florentine Lasagna

*Makes 8 servings*

Speedy and unique

- 2, 10 ounce packages frozen chopped spinach
- 3 cups chopped cooked chicken
- 2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
- ⅓ cup chopped onion
- ½ teaspoon grated nutmeg
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1, 10 ¾ ounce can cream of mushroom soup
- 8 ounces sour cream
- 1, 4 ½ ounce jar sliced mushrooms, drained
- ⅓ cup mayonnaise
- 6 no-boil lasagna noodles
- 1 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted

Preheat oven to 350 F.

Thaw and drain frozen spinach. Combine spinach, chicken, cheddar cheese, onion, nutmeg, cornstarch, salt, pepper, soy sauce, soup, sour cream, mushrooms and mayonnaise in a mixing bowl. Stir well. Spread ¾ cup of the chicken mixture in a lightly greased 9" x 13" pan. Top with three lasagna noodles. Spread half the remaining chicken mixture over noodles. Repeat with the remaining noodles and chicken mixture. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese.

Saute pecans in butter over medium heat in a skillet for 3 minutes or until toasted. Sprinkle over casserole.

Cover and bake for 55-60 minutes. Let stand for 5 minutes before serving.

## Williamsburg Apple Cream Cheese Torte

Makes 1-9 inch torte

Crust:

1 stick margarine or butter, softened

5   tablespoons sugar

½   teaspoon vanilla

1⅓   cups flour

Filling:

12 ounces cream cheese, softened

¼   cup sugar

1 egg

1 teaspoon lemon rind

Topping:

1 quart baking apples, peeled and sliced

¼   cup sugar

1 teaspoon cinnamon

¼   teaspoon nutmeg

6   tablespoons slivered or sliced almonds

Cream margarine and sugar. Add vanilla and flour. Pat into bottom

And 1 inch up sides of springform pan.. Chill.

Combine cream cheese, sugar, egg and lemon juice. Spread over crust.

Combine apples, sugar, cinnamon and nutmeg. Arrange on top of cheese mixture. Sprinkle with almonds. Bake at 425 F. for 10 minutes. Reduce heat to 375 and bake 35 minutes longer. Cool completely before serving.

## Menu for 24

Beef Bourguignon

Potatoes au Gratin

Zucchini and Yellow Squash Medley

Lemon Delight

French bread

Coffee and/or tea

Tips: Plan ahead

Read all recipes carefully

Enjoy

## Lemon Delight

Serves 12

Must do ahead

1 cup flour

1-8 oz. package cream cheese, softened

½ cup butter

2-3 ½ oz. packages instant lemon pudding

½ cup chopped pecans

3 cups milk

2 cups whipped topping, divided

Optional: ¼ cup chopped pecans

1 cup confectioner's sugar

Combine first three ingredients. Turn into a 9" x 13" x 2" pan. Bake at 375 F. for 15 minutes. Cool. Beat one cup whipped topping with confectioner's sugar and cream cheese. Pour over cool crust. Prepare pudding following package directions, using only three cups of milk. Spread over second layer. Spread remaining 1 cup whipped topping on top. Sprinkle with extra pecans, if desired. Chill 4 hours.

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## Beef Bourguignon

Serves 24

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup corn oil

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup flour

8 pounds lean boneless stew beef, cubed

3 cups tomato puree

2 onions, chopped

6 cups dry red wine

7 carrots, chopped

6 cups beef broth

3 stalks celery, chopped

3 teaspoons thyme

6 bay leaves

3 cups mushrooms, sliced

For added flavor, marinate beef in red wine. Reserve marinade for use in stew. Heat oil in skillet. Saute beef until browned. Add onions, carrots and celery to skillet and saute until tender. Transfer mixture to a stock pot. Blend in flour. Add remaining ingredients. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to a simmer 30-40 minutes. Remove bay leaves, add mushrooms. Cook an additional 5-10 minutes.

Can do all but mushrooms ahead. Add mushrooms before serving.

## Potatoes au Gratin

Serves 24

30 medium potatoes, peeled and sliced

4 teaspoons dry mustard

1  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups butter or margarine

12 cups milk

3 cups onion, chopped

4 cups cheddar cheese, shredded

1 cup flour

2 cups cracker crumbs

5 teaspoons salt

4 teaspoons Worcestershire

Cook potatoes until tender. Drain well. Melt one cup butter: add onion. Saute until tender. Blend in flour, salt, Worcestershire and dry mustard. Gradually stir in milk. Cook, stirring constantly, until sauce thickens. Boil one minute. Remove from heat. Add cheese. Stir until cheese is melted. Place potatoes in 4 greased 11" x 7" baking dishes. Pour cheese sauce over potatoes. Sprinkle with cracker crumbs combined with  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup melted butter. Bake at 350 F. for 30 minutes or until golden.

Garnish with parsley.

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## Zucchini and Yellow Squash Medley

Serves 24

24 strips of bacon

12 medium zucchini, cut in  $\frac{1}{4}$ " slices

12 medium yellow squash, cut in  $\frac{1}{4}$ " rounds

2 medium onions, thinly sliced

Fry bacon in large Dutch oven until crisp. Remove and drain. Crumble and set aside. Add remaining ingredients to Dutch oven. Salt and pepper to taste. Cover and cook until just done, stirring occasionally. Do not overcook. Remove from pan with a slotted spoon into a serving dish. Sprinkle with crumbled bacon.

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# PARTY THEMES

- Wine and cheese tasting
- Casual parties with theme
- Potluck suppers
- Salad bar or soda bar parties
- Progressive dinner
- Seasonal parties
- "Moan and Groan" — usually soon after the ship leaves
- Pizza Party
- Cinco de Mayo (May 5)
- Garden Party
- Pool Party
- Texas Barbecue with chili cookoff and square dancing
- Bridal Showers/Groom's Shower
- Oktoberfest
- Chocolate Lovers Party
- Come As You Are
- Prom Night
- Flight Suit Party
- Great Gatsby Party — all in 1920's style
- Favorite Heroes and Heroines
- Let's Get Physical — dress for your favorite sport
- M\*A\*S\*H
- 19<sup>th</sup> Hole
- Ice Cream Social
- Italian Dinner — cover the furniture and eat only with kitchen utensils
- Travelers dinner — each room is decorated as a different country, with food to suit

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## Novelty Parties

- Pool party, picnics or barbecues
- Brown bag party at a playground with children included
- Roller skating, ice skating or bowling party
- Scavenger hunt
- International night
- Special days: Halloween, Super Bowl, Kentucky Derby, St. Patrick's Day, college sweatshirt, Army-Navy, etc.
- Talent Auction — auction special talents of labor of the members of the group
- Poor Man's Party (April 15)
- Mardi Gras
- Backwards Party (dress and decorate backwards)
- Bon Voyage
- Caribbean Party
- Miniature golf

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## Decorate

- Plan ahead. If you have a theme, use it.
- If it's an Army-Navy party, use GI Joe toys, artificial trees, toy tanks, and camouflage for the tablecloth. Put Bill the Goat on a separate table, along with some navy blue and gold pom poms.
- If you want atmosphere, put a variety of clear glasses (wine, highballs, brandy, DOF) in the center of your table, and place a votive candle in each glass. It's even prettier if the glasses are placed on a silver tray.
- Watching your budget? Use long, curled pieces of curling ribbon (buy the large spools at a party supply store) and drape them on your table tops and chandelier. Sprinkle confetti on every table top: coffee and end tables, too.
- Or get an attractive container for your centerpiece (a favorite bowl) and place a mixture of seedless grapes in it, heaping it beautifully. (Guests will nibble, so be sure they're washed.)
- Fresh flowers are always available and a lovely touch. Provide your own container for the florist if you wish.
- If you're hosting a football party (or another TV oriented get-together), place televisions in every room your guests will use (including the powder room), placing the TVs high enough so everyone can see them.
- Harvest time — scoop out a squash or pumpkin, place a margarine dish or empty Cool Whip container inside, with oasis taped in place in the bowl, and arrange fresh flowers or branches yourself. Melons, pineapples, bell peppers, etc. are also suitable.
- Holiday greenery can be lovely, not only on a tabletop but draped on your chandelier, across your mantle, or on the handrail of your stairs. (See "Caring for Fresh Flowers: Wreaths") Using wire, attach the sections together if making a garland. Or wire the greenery to a metal frame. Decorate with fresh or artificial fruit, tie in place with ribbon, etc.
- Spray paint a variety of nuts (still in their shells) either silver or gold. They can be scattered over your table, drilled and wired to a garland or wreath, etc. Keep them so they can be used over and over.
- Fresh miniature ivy can be tied to make a lovely napkin ring.
- A wooden cone with nails sticking out (go to Williamsburg, if necessary) provides a wonderful centerpiece for fruits (apples, oranges or tangerines, lemons and limes). Just place the fruit on the spikes, and use boxwood garland or ivy or pine to fill in the holes.
- A quilt makes a beautiful tablecloth.

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# GARNISHING

- It adds a lot to the visual appeal of your food.
  - Try to vary the number of colors (3-4 is good), textures, shapes, and flavors.
  - Plan the garnish in advance, so whatever you need is already washed and dry and ready to use.
  - Store each garnish in a separate ziploc bag with a folded paper towel at the bottom (particularly if it is wet when you store it.)
  - Use small metal cookie cutters or canape cutters to cut shapes in roasted red pepper, bell peppers, turnips, etc. Or carve a shape with a knife. A tracing wheel (at sewing stores) can add veins to a leaf shape.
  - Frosted grapes: Using a 1" paintbrush or pastry brush, dip or paint the grapes with egg whites. Let excess drip off. Roll in a bowl of white sugar, sprinkling to make sure all of the cluster is covered. Store at room temperature, as refrigeration will cause condensation, making the sugar sticky and lumpy.
  - Chocolate leaves: Using rose leaves that have been rinsed and air dried, drag the bottom of the leaf across a pan of melted chocolate morsels. Place chocolate side up on a foil pan or a foil-covered plate and refrigerate until ready for use. Carefully peel away leaf from chocolate. Make several extra leaves, as they don't all turn out.
- 

## Paint the Plates

Want a special look? Paint your plates with cooking ingredients such as:

- mustard (Dijon or dried)
- a dusting of cocoa or powdered sugar
- a sauce
- parsley bits
- paprika
- dots of pesto sauce
- chocolate chips
- thinly sliced scallion tips, scattered over plate
- Go to a beauty supply store and buy 2 or 3 squeeze bottles (used for hair color).
- Cut off the tip, leaving a small opening.
- Fill with the decoration of choice, and paint a border

EX: Squeeze (or pipe with a cake decorating tube and tip) a loose zigzag with pesto sauce around the border of your plates. Inside every other zigzag, place a small dab of dried mustard. On the alternate zigzags, put a small piece of tomato. You now have three colors, attractively arranged. The plates may be stored in the refrigerator for a few hours. Lovely for a salad. If you're offering a "Death by Chocolate" dessert, drizzle thin lines of melted white and regular chocolate morsels on the plate, sprinkle cocoa or Nestles Quick on top of your drizzles, and place individual servings on each plate. Write "RIP" on each serving with the white chocolate. A raspberry with a sprig of mint to one side completes your "painting".

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# PARTY RECORD

DATE & TIME:

TYPE OF PARTY:

OCCASION:

DRESS:

RATE OF EXCHANGE:

WHAT I WORE:

MENU:

COOKBOOK/PAGE NUMBER

WINES SERVED:

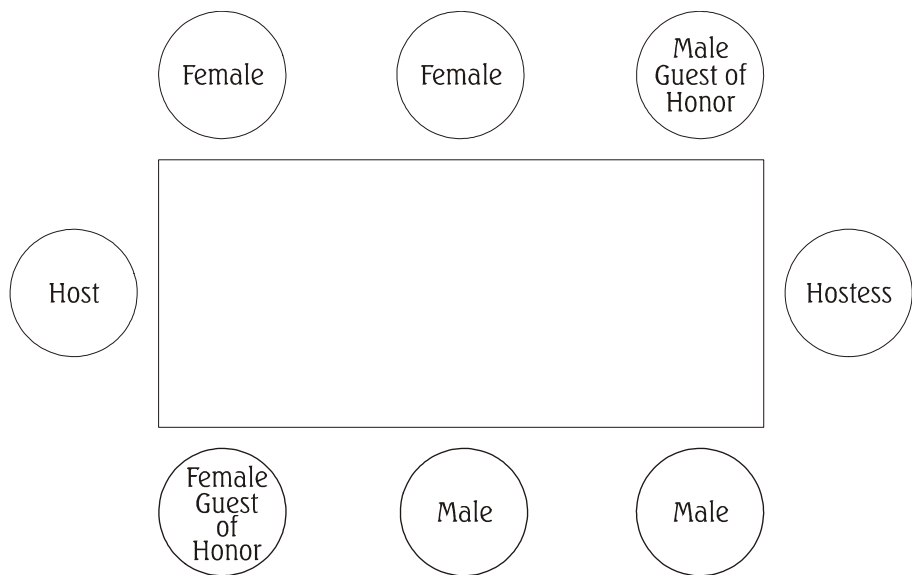
TABLE SETTING AND DECORATIONS:

REMARKS:

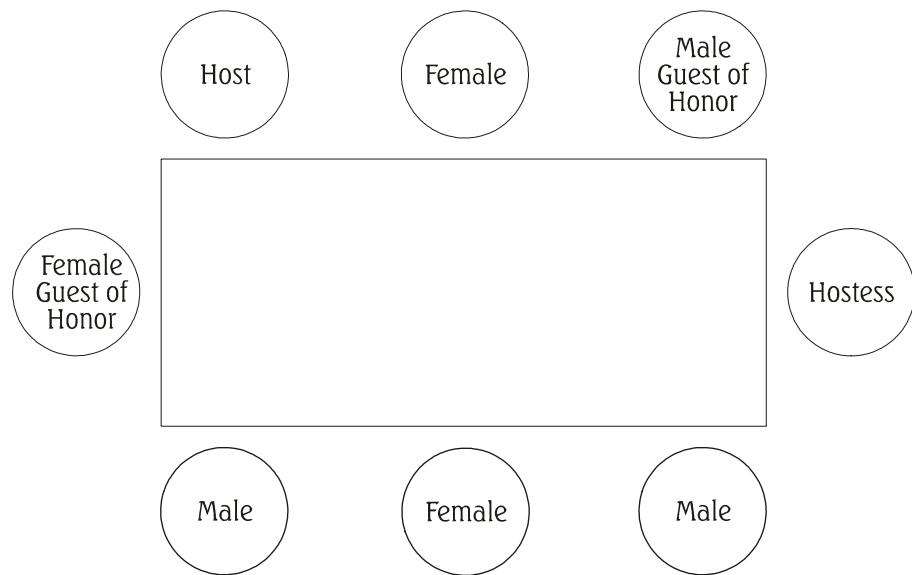
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# SEATING PLAN FOR DINNER FOR EIGHT

In order to avoid having two men or two women sit next to each other, an alternative method of seating at a dinner for eight is to have the host sit on the side.



Seating Plan for Dinner for Eight



Seating Plan for Dinner for Eight, Alternative

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# WINE GLASS AND TABLE SETTINGS

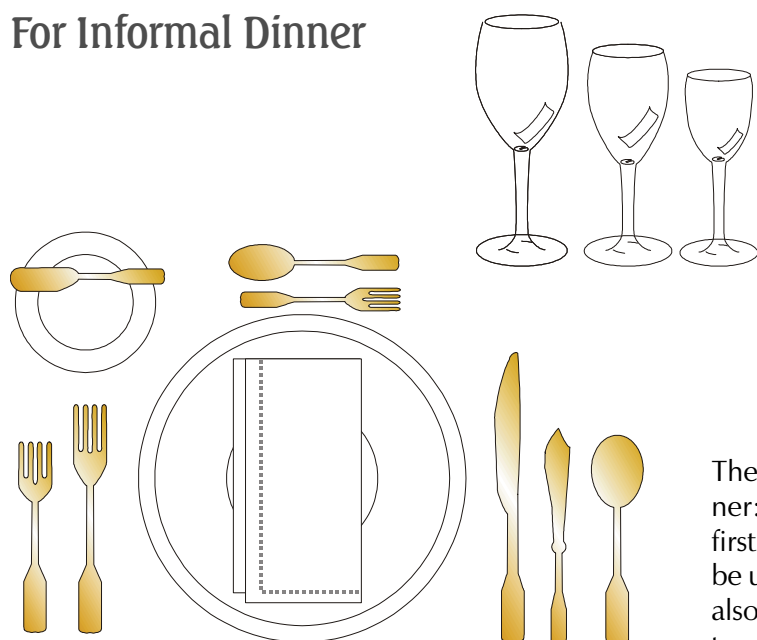
## For Formal Dinner



The correct placement of wineglasses at a formal dinner at which will be served (right to left): consommé (sherry); fish (white wine); meat entree (red wine); and dessert (champagne). The largest glass, of course, is for water.

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## For Informal Dinner



The placement of wineglasses for a less formal dinner: the white-wine glass will be used only for the first course (soup). The middle, red-wine glass will be used during the remaining courses. Glasses may also be placed on a diagonal, starting with the water glass, leading to lower right.



## informal Dinner Setting

### FIRST COURSE: APPETIZER

The appetizer is usually in place when the guest is seated. If not, the dinner napkin is on the place plate instead of to the left of the forks, as shown. The seafood fork is shown in one of the three accepted ways of placing it. Ash trays are optional, since many hostesses do not offer cigarettes now. The butter plate is used less and less, and is optional. The salt and pepper are to the side so the set may be shared by the neighbor on the right.

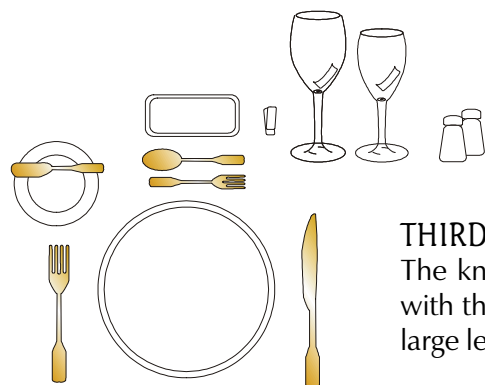


### ANOTHER KIND OF FIRST COURSE: SOUP

The soup may be served in either the traditional flat soup plate or in a creamed soup cup. If another appetizer is served, soup may be omitted. There are usually three or four courses served at an informal dinner.

### SECOND COURSES: ENTREE

The table at the beginning of the entree course.

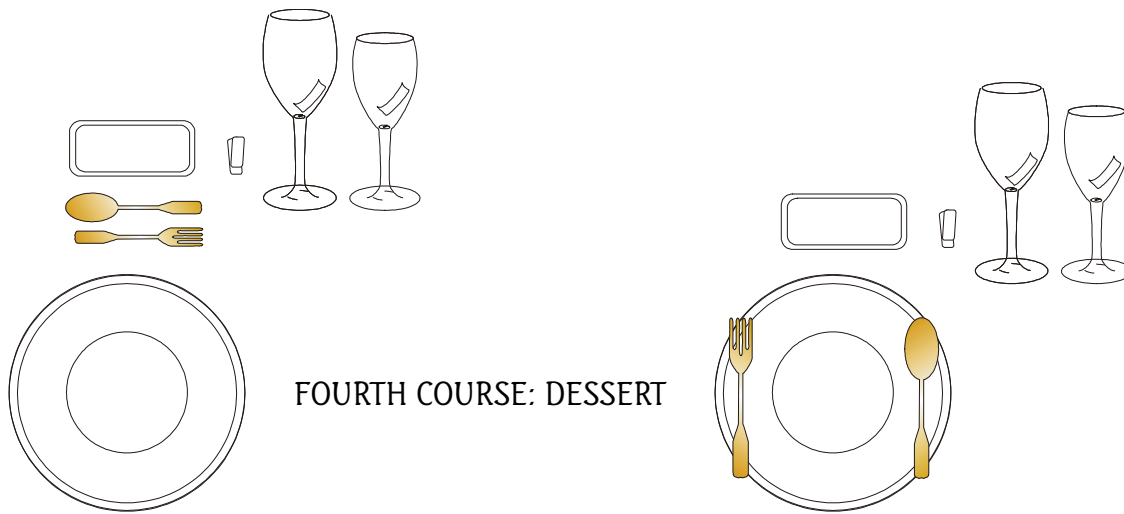


### THIRD COURSE: SALAD

The knife is optional, depending on whether or not cheese will be served with the salad. (Some people like a knife, however, to use in cutting overly large lettuce leaves.)

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## Informal Dinner Setting

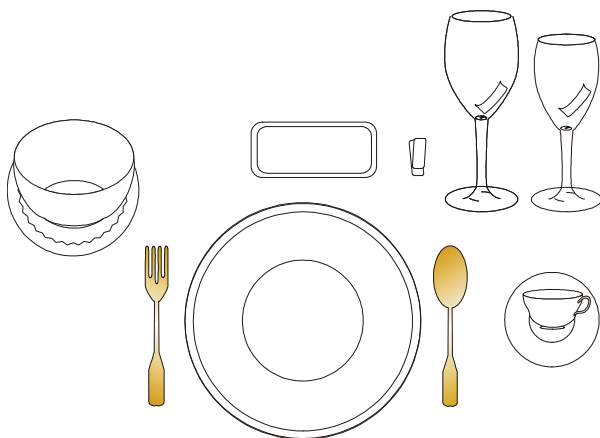
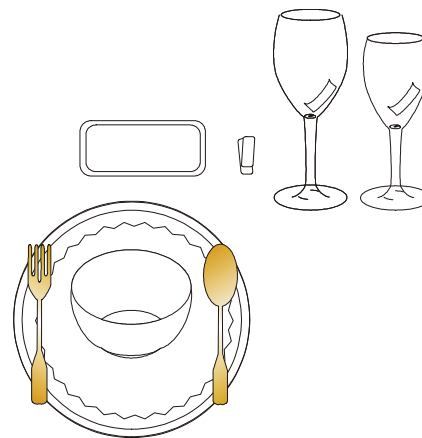


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## How to use a finger bowl

### FINGER BOWL AND DEMITASSE:















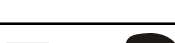

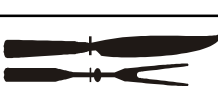

If there are finger bowls (a vanishing custom) the dessert service is placed before the guest this way: finger bowl on doily and/or small plate, flanked by dessert fork and spoon on dessert plate.



Guest rearranges dessert service like this: doily and finger bowl (including small plate, if any) upper left, fork left and spoon right of dessert plate, awaiting service of dessert. If demitasse coffee is to be served at the table, the cup and saucer are placed to the right of the dessert plate. The coffee may be poured in the kitchen or by the hostess at the table and passed, but only after the meal is finished.

# SERVING PIECES

Most  
Frequently  
Used

		Bon bon or nut spoon	Also for canapes.
■		Butter knife	For butter service on the butter dish. For cheeses and hors d'oeuvres.
■		Cheese server	For cutting and serving solid cheeses and spreads. Also for molded jellies.
■		Cold meat or buffet fork	For meat, fish, salads served on platters.
		Cream or sauce ladle	Also for mayonnaise.
		Flat server	For hard-to-balance foods like broccoli, asparagus, sliced tomatoes, and pancakes.
■		Gravy ladle	For stews, soups, creamed dishes, and dessert sauces, too.
■		Jelly server	Also for cutting and serving cheeses and relishes.
		Lemon fork	For serving olives, pickles, and butter pats.
		Lemon, olive, or pickle fork	Doubles as a butter pick.
		Pie or cake server	For pastries, frozen desserts, fish, and aspics, as well.
■		Salad or serving spoon	Larger than a tablespoon. For vegetables, berries, salads, puddings, and casseroles.
■		Sugar Spoon	Also great for thick sauces and relishes.
		Sugar tongs	Go in the small ice bucket or on the candy dish, too.
■		Tablespoon	The indispensable, multi-purpose spoon.
■		Pierced tablespoon	For fruit and vegetables served in their own juices.
■		Roast carving set	For slicing and serving large roasts, hams, and poultry.
		Steak set	Slightly smaller. For steaks, small roasts, and poultry.

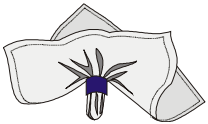
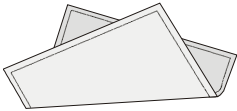
Source: *Service Etiquette* by Orthea Swartz, Naval Institute Press.

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# FOLDING NAPKINS

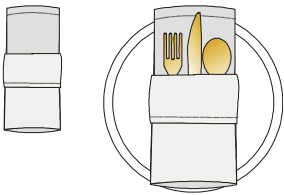
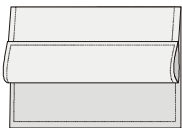
A couple of minutes spent on folding napkins can add a great deal of class to your dinner table. Here are a few ideas.

## Basic Posy



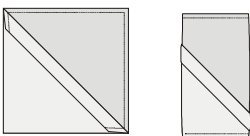
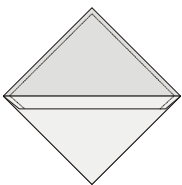
- A. Lay napkin open and flat. Bring lower right corner up to and beyond top edge, forming two small, equal triangles on either side.
- B. Holding napkin in center of bottom edge, loosely pull napkin through a napkin ring, gathering in loose folds.
- C. Gently shake napkin to make folds fall attractively.

## Buffet Fold



- A. Lay napkin open and flat. Fold the napkin in half to form a rectangle with folded edge at the bottom. Fold top edge of the first layer down 2 inches towards middle; then fold down again 2 inches towards bottom edge.
- B. Turn napkin over. Bring right edge to center. Repeat, folding this section over on itself two more times in same direction.
- C. Tuck flatware into pocket that is formed.

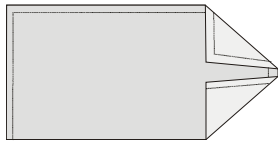
## Cummerbund fold



- A. Lay napkin open and flat. Fold napkin into quarters with closed corner pointing down towards you. Tightly roll top layer down to center.
- B. Rotate napkin to the right so that roll runs on a diagonal from top left to bottom right.
- C. Holding roll in the same position, fold left and right edges under until they meet and overlap slightly. The remaining rectangle should feature a band that runs diagonally from left to right

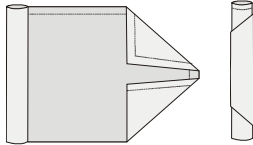
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## Diploma Roll



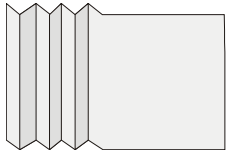
A. Lay napkin open and flat. Fold napkin in half to form a rectangle with folded edge at the top. Fold top right and bottom right corners in to meet and form rectangle.

B. Roll napkin all the way up from left to right.



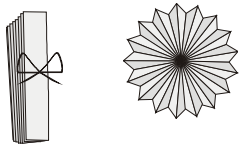
C. Secure napkin with a ribbon or napkin ring.

## Double Fan

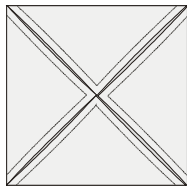


A. Lay napkin open and flat. Fold in top and bottom edges of napkin so that they meet in middle. Starting with left side, pleat napkin accordion-fashion.

B. Holding pleats together, tie a bow around the center with a ribbon. C. Fan top and bottom pleats out into a circle.



## Starburst Fold



A. Lay napkin open and flat, wrong side up. Fold four corners in sharply so that points meet in center.

B. Fold four new corners in so that they also meet in center. Holding folds in place with your left hand, flip napkin over. Then fold in new corners to meet in center. Place napkin in center of plate.

C. Hold napkin corners firmly together in center with your left hand. With your right hand, reach underneath each corner and pick up loose point. Sharply pull each loose point outward. Repeat for each corner and point.

